Armed Raider Ship

DCT 10/21/61

NEW YORK (UPI) — A ship flying the Liberian flag has been seized by Dutch authorities at the Caribbean island of Curacao on suspicion of being an armed raider, it was learned Wednesday.

The ship was identified as the Joanne, of 596 gross tonnage. It was towed into Curacao September 23 for repairs of unspecified damage, maritime sources said. The Cuban crew—presumably anti-Castro exiles—abandoned the ship in port and disappeared.

Dutch authorities found some automatic weapons, ammunition and gun parts aboard when they searched the ship. A Dutch official said in Curacao, "The impression is the ship was used for military operations."

(On September 13, the Spanish freighter Sierra de Aranzazu was attacked in Cuban waters by two unidentified armed boats apparently operating from a "mother ship." There was no immediate indication, however, the Joanne, taken into tow 10

Suspect Captured

days later, was connected with the attacks).

Ownership of the Joanne, was traced to a Liberian shipping firm, Kuestenvarsand, A. G., represented in the United States by the Bruan Shipping Corp., Baltimore, Md.

Bruan's general manager, Lester Anderson, said the ship had been chartered for the past year by "Maritima Bam, S. A.," of Miami, Fla.

Anderson said Bam's president was a Cuban, Sixto Mesa, of Coral Gables, Fla. Mesa, who has been identified as a close friend of Manuel Artime, head of the Exile Revolutionary Recovery Movement said he "knew nothing" of any "military" use of the Joanne.